

Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheets of drawings include formal drawings for Figs. 1-20.

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 6, 8, 10, 14, 16, 20, 21, 25, 31, 32, and 34 - 37 have been amended.

Objection to the Drawings

The drawings stand objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a) for failing to show a feature in the claims. A third channel in a second securing member is shown, for example, in Fig. 15 (channel 142) and in Fig. 17 (channels 228 and 240).

Applicants request that the objection be withdrawn.

The drawings stand objected to as not being in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d). Replacement drawings have been submitted.

Objections to the Claims

Claim 20, 21, and 25 stand objected to due to informalities. The informalities have been corrected.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-38 stand rejected under 102(b) as anticipated by Miotto (U.S. Patent 6,406,093). Applicants respectfully disagree.

The Examiner asserts that Miotto shows a base element 22 with an enlarged edge portion 24. Claim 1 has been amended to show that the entirety of the first securing member is disposed within the channel of the second securing member, as shown in Fig. 5. Miotto does not teach such an arrangement. Claim 1 has also been amended to show that the first securing member has two arms, which are disposed on opposite sides of the base element. This amendment is supported in the figures as well as in the specification (e.g., ¶ 45, ll. 4-5). Miotto does not show that the arms of the first securing member are on opposite sides of the base element. Therefore, claims 1-13 are not anticipated, and Applicants request that the rejection of dependent claims 1-13 be withdrawn.

Claim 14 has been amended to more clearly show that the edge portion has a greater thickness than the base element itself. This is supported in numerous figures, as well as in language in the specification (e.g., ¶ 32, ll. 4-7). What the Examiner asserts as the edge portion in Miotto does not have a greater thickness than the base element, as now required in the claims. Additionally, claim 14 has been amended to show that the first securing member has two arms, which are disposed on opposite sides of the base element. Miotto does not show that the arms of the first securing member are disposed on opposite sides of the base element. Therefore, claims 14-19 are not anticipated, and Applicants request that the rejection of dependent claims 14-19 be withdrawn.

Claim 20 has been amended to include that the edge portion is generally rounded, and the arms of the securing member are disposed on opposite sides of the edge portion, and an inner surface of the securing member is disposed around an entirety of the edge portion. Miotto does not teach a securing member with arms on opposite sides of a generally rounded edge portion or an inner surface of the securing member disposed around an entirety of the edge portion. Therefore, claim 20, and dependent claims 21-29, are not anticipated by Miotto and Applicants request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Regarding claim 23, Miotto does not teach a securing member with an inner layer made of a thermoplastic material and an outer layer made of a thermoplastic elastomer material. Regarding claim 26, Miotto does not teach a securing member with a mouth and a channel wider than the mouth. Regarding claim 28, Miotto does not teach a securing element with a plurality of notches. For these additional reasons, claims 23, 26, and 28 are not anticipated by Miotto.

Claim 31 has been amended to indicate that base element includes a generally rounded edge portion, wherein a thickness of the edge portion is greater than a thickness of the base element, and that a securing member is disposed around the edge portion. Miotto does not teach such an arrangement. Therefore, claim 31 is not anticipated by Miotto and Applicants request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 32 has been amended to indicate that each securing member includes a first arm and a second arm, with the first arms adapted to be adjacent each other and the second arms adapted to be adjacent each other. Miotto does not teach such an arrangement. Therefore, claim 32 and dependent claim 33 are not anticipated by Miotto and Applicants request that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 34 has been amended to indicate that the furniture component includes a base element with an enlarged edge portion, wherein a thickness of the enlarged edge portion is greater than a thickness of the base element, and that an entirety of the first securing member is disposed within the second channel. Miotto does not teach such an arrangement. Therefore, claim 34 and dependent claims 35 and 36 are not anticipated by Miotto and Applicants request that the rejection be withdrawn.

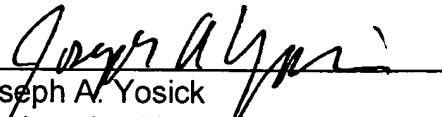
Claim 37 has been amended to indicate that the furniture component includes a base element with an enlarged edge portion, wherein a thickness of the enlarged edge portion is greater than a thickness of the base element, and an entirety of the enlarged edge portion is disposed into a channel in a securing member. Miotto does not teach such an arrangement. Therefore, claim 37 and dependent claim 38 are not anticipated by Miotto and Applicants request that the rejection be withdrawn.

For all of the above reasons, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections of claims 1-38 be withdrawn.

SUMMARY

If the Examiner has any remaining issues, he is invited to contact the undersigned attorneys for the Applicant via telephone if such communication would expedite this application.

Respectfully submitted,



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